The Garden Clean Up Crew

Objective: Students will investigate and compare the physical characteristics of different seeds through hands-on observation and collection. Students will explore plant life cycles, identify the basic needs of plants, and develop an understanding of how decomposers contribute to healthy garden ecosystems.

Materials: four paper bags (each containing a different type of seeds), sandwich baggies (one for each student)

1. Community Garbage Collectors: Discuss nature's decomposers, including earthworms, fungi, and microorganisms, and how they help keep gardens healthy by breaking down organic matter and returning nutrients to the soil.
2. Seed Collection Stations: Set up four stations throughout the garden, each featuring a different variety of seeds. Have students rotate through the four stations, collecting one seed variety at each station and placing the seeds in their collection baggies.
4. Encourage students to examine their collected seeds, comparing their sizes, shapes, colors, and textures. Discuss how the seeds differ and how each seed has the potential to grow into a new plant when provided with the appropriate conditions.
6. Allow students to take their collected seeds home to plant, encouraging them to observe germination and plant growth.

Mindfulness Activity- Mindful Reflection

Length: 1 minute

Materials: none

Finish by asking students to quietly consider one small way they can help care for the garden, just as nature's decomposers help keep the soil healthy.

Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL)

SOL Strands: Living Systems and Processes; Scientific and Engineering Practices
Primary SOL Alignment: K.5b, K.7b, 1.4b–c, 2.4b, 3.1

Month: October